

day until research identifies a cure. I hope that my colleagues will make more funds available for the prostate cancer research program at the Department of Defense so that we may offer hope to the millions affected by this deadly disease.●

JIM SOLOMON AND HIS RETIREMENT AS THE ALABAMA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OPINIONS DIVISION CHIEF

● Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I would like to take a few moments to speak to you about Jim Solomon, who is retiring from his position as head of the Alabama Attorney General's Opinions Division after 35 years of service to the state of Alabama.

This division fields legal advice requests from all over the state of Alabama, with the majority of the requests coming from local government officials having various questions concerning ambiguities in state laws. While opinions are not legally binding, they are used as guidelines by the various entities in developing public policy. Therefore, correct interpretation of Alabama laws are essential to the smaller communities and agencies that do not have a legal staff. Mr. Solomon's contributions to this effort have been extraordinary and should be noted.

I had the honor of working with Mr. Solomon during my term as the Attorney General of Alabama. He was an outstanding employee who believed in service above self. He never strayed from this work ethic during his 19 years in that office. He served as a role model to others and was someone who could always be counted on regardless of the job or the circumstances. His administrative and supervisory abilities were superior and he was greatly loved by those with whom he worked. One of his most impressive achievements was the indexing of all Opinions from 1979 forward, making it possible for the public to have access to them on the Internet.

During Mr. Solomon's employment in the Opinions Division, he was responsible for writing approximately 8,000 Opinions for state and local officials. One of the most memorable opinions caused the previously closed state legislative committee meetings to open to the public.

Jim Solomon is more than a great public servant. He possesses in rich measure the qualities that made for a great citizen, a strong churchman, a faithful family man and a good friend to many. He sets high standards and a good example for all of us.

Mr. President, I appreciate being able to make these brief comments to my fellow colleagues because it is important that Jim Solomon be recognized for his years of outstanding service to Alabama.●

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION ON MENTAL RETARDATION ILLINOIS CHAPTER'S 1998 DIRECT SERVICE PROFESSIONAL AWARD WINNERS

● Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN. Mr. President, it is my distinct pleasure to join the Illinois chapter of the American Association on Mental Retardation in honoring the recipients of the 1998 Direct Service Professional Award. These honorees are being recognized for their outstanding commitment and contributions to the lives of people in Illinois with developmental disabilities.

These award winners have distinguished themselves through their compassion, dedication, patience and professionalism. Their work not only enriches the lives of those who they care for, but also enriches all of our lives and sets an example of service for all Americans to follow.

It is important to note that the individuals being honored are professionals who spend at least 50 percent of their time directly working with and assisting their clients in the clients' life-space. These people are not supervisors or managers. Instead, they are direct service providers on the front-lines of our nation's mental health care system, delivering much needed and much appreciated care and assistance.

It is indeed my privilege to recognize and celebrate the achievements of the following Illinois direct service professionals: Henry Barrington, Raymond Betke, Shelly Cross, Caroline Frost, Patty Hart, Zarina Hasham, Debbie Huff, Carolyn Johnson, Molly Kuster, Preston McBride, Pearlene McDougal, Patricia Mercer, Lisa Pyle, Della Reese, Michael Smith, Marie Thompson, Marcia Weidman, Jodie White, Katie Whiteford and Sabrina Willis. It is my honor to serve these dedicated professionals in the United States Senate.

I am confident that my colleagues here in the Senate will take this opportunity to join me in saluting the winners of the 1998 Direct Service Professional Award. These awardees represent the best spirit of community service.●

TRIBUTE TO CONNIE DRAKELEY

● Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, I come to the floor today with the sad task of informing the Senate of the passing of one of my staff, Connie Drakeley. Connie died in her sleep last week and coming to terms with her sudden passing has been difficult.

Connie was a very important member of my staff and will be greatly missed. She will be missed not only for the large contributions she made to the office, but also because she was our friend.

Connie joined my staff in March, 1995 in the position of Editor. She came aboard during a time when the mail was building up and a significant backlog was forming—in short order, Connie alleviated the problem.

The mail we receive from our constituents and, in return, answer is the lifeblood of our representative government. It was in this context and with this attitude that Connie worked as Editor on my staff. She, in many ways, had the hardest job in the office—with red pen, she pointed out everyone's mistakes! But she always worked very diligently, professionally and responsibly. She worked long hours and often took work home with her; she made us all better writers. She labored in this manner to make sure that my mail was without fault.

Connie was always ready with advice and assistance when someone on staff needed help right away with a letter, speech or a press release. Though the work load sometimes could have overwhelmed her, she always rose to the challenge and kept her promises to get her editing done on time.

She was very knowledgeable and up-to-date on legislation—she watched the floor, read Congress Daily—she didn't just correct grammar, but content as well. She knew the issues and could spot a mistake a mile away. We realized how much the entire process depended on her whenever she took vacation. Mail came first to Connie! I will always be thankful for her remarkable commitment to a demanding and stressful job and her respect for the English language.

Connie dedicated her life to being the best editor one can be. Before she came to my office, she worked as an editor for Senator HARRY REID, for the National Archives, for Bechtel, and as a picture researcher for LIFE magazine.

I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to Connie's daughter, brother and other family members. On behalf of my entire office, I wish to let them know that our prayers and thoughts are with them.

Connie was an indispensable member of our team; her energy, vitality, and dedication will be missed for a long time. We simply couldn't have accomplished what we did on a weekly basis for the past few years without her. Personally and professionally, we have lost a good friend and coworker.●

NATIONAL MISSILE DEFENSE

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, in light of the recent vote on national missile defense, I feel compelled to explain my position on this important issue. In short, I agree with this Nation's senior military officers, the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Each of them opposes the National Missile Defense bill, and they provided a detailed explanation of their position in a letter they sent to Capitol Hill prior to the vote.

The National Missile Defense bill would require that a national missile defense system be deployed as soon as it is "technologically feasible." Conversely, the current plan calls for the Defense Department, by the year 2000, to research and develop such a system and then be able to deploy it within